

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 085898
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R 040157Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 085898

STADIS/////////
EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR FROM DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY READ

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OGEN

SUBJECT: PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF DOD POLITICO-MILITARY
POSITIONS

1. YOU WILL RECALL DOD PROPOSAL LAST YEAR FOR ESTABLISHMENT
OF POLITICO-MILITARY POSITIONS, TO BE FILLED BY CIVILIAN
OFFICERS FROM DOD/ISA, IN CERTAIN POSTS, INCLUDING ADDRESS-
EES. EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SECSTATE AND SECDEF
IS QUOTED BELOW. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS (IN STADIS
RESPONSE) IN LIGHT OF SECDEF'S LETTER OF MARCH 27, 1978.

2. SECSTATE LETTER OF DECEMBER 27, 1977: QUOTE. DEAR
HAROLD:

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 085898

YOU WILL RECALL OUR CONVERSATION SOME MONTHS AGO WHEN YOU
SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF THE ASSIGNMENT OF POLITICO-
MILITARY ATTACHES, TO BE SELECTED FROM THE CIVILIAN OFFICERS
IN DOD/ISA, TO OUR EMBASSIES IN TOKYO, PARIS, BONN AND LON-
DON. THIS SEEMED A GOOD IDEA TO ME AT THE TIME, BUT I HAVE
HAD TO REVISE THAT ASSESSMENT IN THE LIGHT OF FURTHER CON-
SIDERATIONS.

WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS PROPOSAL WITH THE EMBASSIES AND RECEIVED MIXED REACTIONS. BOTH TOKYO AND PARIS ARE STRONGLY

OPPOSED ON POLITICAL GROUNDS. BOTH MIKE MANSFIELD AND ART HARTMAN BELIEVE THAT THE HOST GOVERNMENTS WOULD NOT BE RECEPTIVE TO A HIGH-LEVEL ADDITION TO THE EMBASSY STAFF IN AN AREA OF POLITICAL SENSITIVITY BOTH IN THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN POLICY AND IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. FURTHER, THE AMBASSADORS OBJECT TO THE PROPOSAL ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THEIR PRESENT EFFORTS TO COMPLY WITH THE ADMINISTRATION'S DIRECTIVE TO REDUCE PERSONNEL AND THAT IT WOULD INTERFERE WITH EXISTING SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS FOR LIAISON AND CONTROL.

THE EMBASSY IN LONDON IS PREPARED TO CONTINUE WITH THE POLITICO-MILITARY ATTACHE POSITION WHICH HAS EXISTED THERE FOR SEVERAL YEARS; HOWEVER, THEY WOULD NOT CONTEMPLATE ANY CHANGES IN FUNCTION OR STATUS.

THE EMBASSY IN BONN PREFERS NOT TO HAVE A NEW POLITICO-MILITARY ATTACHE ASSIGNED, PARTICULARLY AT A SENIOR LEVEL. WALT STOESSEL THINKS THAT THE FEDERAL GERMAN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT WISH THE MILITARY RELATIONSHIP ACCENTED BY SUCH A MOVE ON OUR PART AND HE THINKS THAT THE PRESENT LIAISON RELATIONSHIP WITH MILITARY COMMANDS AND CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS IS SATISFACTORY.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 085898

MENTS WITH THE MAAG ARE SATISFACTORY. THEY WOULD AGREE TO AN ARRANGEMENT SIMILAR TO THAT IN LONDON, HOWEVER, BUT REQUEST THAT IF AN OFFICER IS ASSIGNED, THE EMBASSY'S SECRETARIAL SHORTAGE IS SUCH THAT HE SHOULD HAVE A SECRETARY ASSIGNED WITH HIM.

I PROPOSE, THEREFORE, THAT WE DROP CONSIDERATION OF ASSIGNMENTS TO TOKYO AND PARIS, LEAVE THE SITUATION IN LONDON AS IT IS, AND THAT DOD ASSIGN A CIVILIAN OFFICER (WITH A SECRETARY, BOTH IN DOD FUNDED POSITIONS) AS POLITICO-MILITARY ATTACHE IN BONN, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT HE WOULD BE ASSIGNED IN ADDITION TO THE POLITICO-MILITARY OFFICERS IN THE POLITICAL SECTION AND WORK UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE PRINCIPAL POLITICO-MILITARY OFFICER IN THE SECTION. SINCERELY, CY. END QUOTE.

3. SECDEF LETTER OF MARCH 27, 1978: QUOTE. DEAR CY:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DECEMBER 17 LETTER REGARDING THE ASSIGNMENTS OF DOD CIVILIAN OFFICERS TO POLITICO-MILITARY POSTS IN SELECTED EUROPEAN CAPITALS AND TOKYO. I UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE POINTS YOU MAKE. WE RECOGNIZED FROM THE

BEGINNING THAT SOME ASPECTS OF THIS IDEA WOULD CAUSE DIFFICULTIES WITH THE EMBASSIES CONCERNED. HOWEVER, I THINK WE MUST WEIGH THESE CONSIDERATIONS AGAINST THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME.

UPON REFLECTION, I CAN ACCEPT YOUR PROPOSAL TO DROP TOKYO AS A LOCATION, AT LEAST AT THIS TIME. AS TO THE LONDON POSITION, I APPRECIATE YOUR WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE WITH THE POLITICO-MILITARY POSITION AS IT NOW STANDS. I AM CONVINCED THAT U.S. INITIATIVES IN NATO, AS WELL AS OUR BILATERAL DEFENSE RELATIONS WITH THE UK, WILL BENEFIT GREATLY FROM THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF A KNOWLEDGEABLE, EXPERIENCED DOD CIVILIAN IN OUR EMBASSY THERE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 085898

IN BONN, I WOULD LIKE TO SEND SOMEONE OF PROVEN ABILITY AND STATURE WHO, WITHIN HIS ASSIGNED FIELD OF RESPONSIBILITIES, COULD INTERACT EFFECTIVELY WITH SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTRY, AND WITH POLITICAL FIGURES INTERESTED IN DEFENSE ISSUES. IN ORDER TO PERMIT SELECTION OF THE BEST POSSIBLE CANDIDATE, AND TO ASSURE ACCESS TO INFLUENTIAL DEFENSE CIRCLES IN BONN, I BELIEVE THIS OFFICER SHOULD REPORT NO LOWER IN THE EMBASSY STRUCTURE THAN TO THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR. SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD PARALLEL THE CURRENT SITUATION AT EMBASSY LONDON. WE WOULD BE MOST RELUCTANT TO ASSIGN A SECRETARY ALONG WITH THE POLITICO-MILITARY OFFICER AT EMBASSY BONN. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN UNDERSTOOD THAT OFFICERS ASSIGNED UNDER THE STATE-DEFENSE EXCHANGE PROGRAM WOULD BE PROVIDED SECRETARIAL SUPPORT BY THE HOST DEPARTMENT. IN OUR JUDGMENT, IT WOULD BE UNDESIRABLE TO SET A UNIQUE PRECEDENT IN THIS CASE WHICH MIGHT PROVOKE QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR TRADITIONAL HANDLING OF SUCH MATTERS.

I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR LETTING ME KNOW SOON IF YOU ARE AGREEABLE WITH PROCEEDING ON THE BASIS SUGGESTED ABOVE FOR LONDON AND BONN. AS A SEPARATE MATTER WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED IN A MORE RELAXED SCHEDULE, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU TO RECONSIDER YOUR SUGGESTION THAT WE NOT PROCEED WITH THE PARIS ASSIGNMENT. DESPITE FRANCE'S LIMITED PARTICIPATION IN ALLIANCE MILITARY AFFAIRS, THERE IS AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF USEFUL WORK TO BE DONE, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELD OF ARMAMENTS COOPERATION AND STANDARDIZATION/INTEROPERABILITY, THAT CANNOT BE HANDLED UNDER THE CURRENT POLITICO-MILITARY STAFFING IN EMBASSY PARIS. A DOD POLITICO-MILITARY ATTACHE WOULD NOT LIKELY GET INVOLVED WITH THE TRADITIONAL POLITICO-MILITARY AREAS OF SALT, MBFR, ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES, ATOMIC ENERGY QUESTIONS, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 STATE 085898

AND THE LIKE. RATHER, WE WOULD SELECT AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A DEFENSE ARMAMENTS BACKGROUND AND BROAD FAMILIARITY WITH U.S. TACTICAL R&D PROGRAMS AND ACQUISITION POLICY. WE WOULD EXPECT HIM TO HELP DEVELOP SPECIFIC COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS WITH THE U.S. IN AREAS WHERE FRENCH TECHNOLOGY AND REQUIREMENTS ARE COMPATIBLE WITH U.S. NEEDS OR WHERE INTEROPERABILITY WOULD HAVE HIGH DEFENSE PAYOFF.

HE WOULD ALSO HELP IDENTIFY AND RESOLVE OBSTACLES (POLITICAL, TECHNICAL, LEGISLATIVE, ETC.) THAT STAND IN THE WAY OF SUCH ARMAMENT COOPERATION WITH US.

IN SUM, I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT EXPERIENCED DOD CIVILIANS ATTACHED TO THESE KEY EUROPEAN EMBASSIES WOULD GIVE A STRONG ASSIST BOTH TO OUR PURSUIT OF U.S. DEFENSE POLICY OBJECTIVES IN NATO AND TO THE RESPECTIVE AMBASSADORS' ABILITY TO INTEGRATE EFFECTIVELY ALL ASPECTS OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THEIR COUNTRIES. HAROLD.
END QUOTE. VANCE

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